Alberta Crop Report

Crop Conditions as of May 2, 2017

Early days!!! Seeding is off to a slow start due to the cool April temperatures experienced throughout the province. In the South, soils have been slow to warm while in the remainder of the province, the cool temperatures slowed the dry down of already saturated soils caused by the wet conditions experienced last fall. Currently, 6% of the province has been seeded compared to 21% in 2016 and the 5 year average of 13%. See Table #1 below.

Hay and pasture conditions are rated 72% good/excellent. Available moisture is very good though fields have been slow to start growth due to the cool temperatures. The warm weather of the past few days should help to get growth underway.

Excessive surface moisture is a major issue across the northern tier of the province which experienced the bulk of the wet conditions last fall. See Table #2 below. A significant period of dry, warm weather is needed to allow soils to dry sufficiently to support the weight of harvesting and seeding equipment. The current forecast is favourable with warm temperatures into the weekend. Cooling temperatures and potential showers are expected over the weekend but above average warm, dry weather is forecasted to return for next week.

Producers have made little progress on the harvest of the overwintered 2016 crop. It is estimated that only 5% of the unharvested crops have been taken off leaving an estimated 1.10 million acres to still be removed. Quality projections are favourable with 75% of cereals having marginal to good feed value and 85% of the canola grading 3 CAN or better.

Table 1: Alberta Seeding Progress as of May 2, 2017

	% Seeded					
	South	Central	N East	N West	Peace	Average
Spr. Wheat	21.5%	0.8%	0%	0%	0%	**5.8%**
Dur. Wheat	21.1%	1.0%	---	---	---	**18.3%**
Barley	22.7%	0.3%	0%	0%	0%	**7.2%**
Oats	16.8%	0%	0%	0%	0%	**1.2%**
Canola	13.7%	0.1%	0%	0%	0%	**2.4%**
Dry Peas	21.5%	1.9%	0%	0%	0%	**9.4%**
Mustard	9.4%	0%	---	---	---	**6.6%**
Flax	10.7%	0%	0%	0%	---	**7.1%**
Potatoes	52.0%	0%	0%	0%	---	**44.7%**
Dry Beans	3.0%	---	---	---	---	**3.0%**
Lentils	10.1%	2.0%	---	---	---	**8.9%**
Corn	12.0%	0%	0%	---	---	**4.0%**
Average	**19.5%**	**0.5%**	**0%**	**0%**	**0%**	5.7%
Last Year	50.2%	19.0%	2.4%	2.8%	10.9%	20.8%
5 Year Ave	35.8%	9.0%	1.7%	1.1%	2.9%	13.1%

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

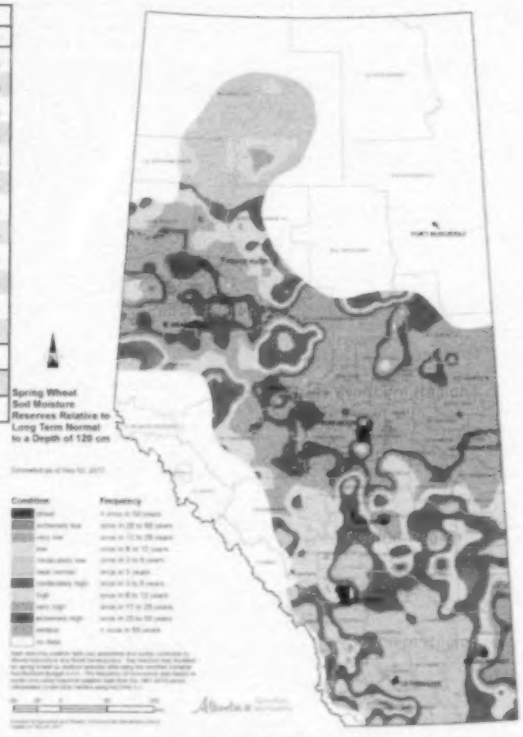

Table 2: Surface Soil Moisture Ratings as of May 2, 2017

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Excessive
South	1.4%	13.9%	40.0%	42.1%	2.5%
Central	0%	4.0%	37.9%	49.4%	8.8%
N East	0%	0%	5.8%	45.0%	49.2%
N West	0%	0%	2.9%	53.9%	43.2%
Peace	0%	12.7%	30.8%	31.9%	24.6%
Average	**0.4%**	**6.6%**	**25.8%**	**44.4%**	**22.8%**
Last Year	11.0%	45.4%	32.4%	11.1%	0.1%

Source: AF/AFSC Crop Reporting Survey

Our thanks to Alberta Agricultural Fieldmen, staff of AFSC and the Alberta Ag-Info Centre for their partnership and contribution to the Alberta Crop Reporting Program.

The precipitation map is compiled by Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Environmental Stewardship Division, Technology and Innovation Branch.

Growing Forward 2
A federal-provincial-territorial initiative

Alberta Government

Canada

REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS:

The 2017 Alberta Crop Report Series continues to provide summaries for the following five regions:

Region One: Southern (Strathmore, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Foremost)

- Precipitation during 2nd half of April similar to long term averages; daily maximum temperatures averaged 2 deg C below the long term average affecting soil warming.
- 20% seeded compared to 50% last year and 5 year average of 36% complete.
- Surface soil moisture rated 82% good or excellent; opposite of the much drier conditions last year.
- Fall Seeded crops rated 58% good, 30% excellent.
- Hay/pasture crops rated 85% good/excellent (last year 38% g/e).
- No 2016 unharvested crops in the region.

Region Two: Central (Rimbey, Airdrie, Coronation, Oyen)

- Precipitation during 2nd half of April above long term averages; daily maximum temperatures averaged 5 deg C below the long term average affecting soil drying.
- Minimal early seeding at 0.5% seeded, principally peas, versus 5 year average of 9% complete.
- 9% of region rating surface soil moisture as excessive (principally NW corner of the region).
- Hay/pasture crops rated 77% good or excellent.
- 15% of unharvested 2016 crops in the region have been harvested (110,000 acres remain).
- 60% of cereals expected to be of good feed value with 35% of marginal feed value; 90% of canola expected to grade 3 CAN or better.

Region Three: North East (Smoky Lake, Vermilion, Camrose, Provost)

- Average 2nd half April precipitation; daily maximum temperatures 7 deg C below historical averages.
- No seeding reported to date versus the 5 year average of 2%.
- 49% of region rated excessive for surface soil moisture.
- 50% of hay/pasture crops rated good or excellent; 42% rated poor due to the delayed start to growth.
- Only 1% of over wintered crops harvested to date (510,000 acres remain).
- 85% of cereals expected to be of marginal to good feed value; 78% of canola to grade as 3 CAN or better.

Region Four: North West (Barrhead, Edmonton, Leduc, Drayton Valley, Athabasca)

- Above average late April precipitation; daily maximum temperatures averaged 6 deg C below long term.
- No seeding reported to date versus 5 year average of 1%.
- 43% of region rated as excessive for surface soil moisture.
- 54% of hay/pastures rated in good or excellent condition; 36% rated poor due to the slow start to growth.
- No harvest of 2016 overwintered crops reported (220,000 acres remain to be harvested).
- 35% of cereals expected to be of marginal to good feed value; 74% of canola expected to grade 3 CAN or better.

Region Five: Peace River (Fairview, Falher, Grande Prairie, Valleyview)

- Region affected by heavy wet snowfall in the last week of April; overall precipitation was average for the 2nd half April period; daily maximum temperatures were 4.5 deg C below historical normals.
- No seeding reported compared to 5 year average of 3%.
- 25% of region rated as excessive for surface soil moisture
- Hay/pastures rated 87% in good or excellent condition.
- 1.5% of unharvested 2016 crops removed to date (260,000 acres remain to be harvested).
- 65% of cereals expected to be of marginal to good feed value; 95% of the canola expected to grade 3 CAN or better.

Agriculture Financial Services Corporation
Actuarial, Analytics & Forecasting Unit
Lacombe, Alberta
May 5, 2017

James Wright, Risk Analyst
E-mail: james.wright *a* afsc.ca
Phone: 403-782-8336

Note to Users: The contents of this document may not be used or reproduced without properly accrediting Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, Economics and Competitiveness Branch, Statistics and Data Development Section.
The 2016 Alberta crop reporting series is available on the Internet at: http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sdd4191